

An Estimate of Kaiser Wilhelm

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Greifswald, (Pommeranie)

March 19th 88

My Dear Mr. Kasson,

You will have heard by this time everything about the great & sad events which have so suddenly come upon our whole country & brought grief & anxiety to every loyal heart. The unexpected decease of our beloved & venerated Emperor is deeply felt all through our wide "fatherland" & as for us Prussians, it seems to us as if each of us had lost a father & a friend. The illness of our poor new "Kaiser" is the most sad & tragical thing one can imagine. All the physicians believe that he will not live longer than a month or two; he tries to take up the burden of the "Regierung", & works with the ministers & tries to do his duty to the last, but he is a dying man. It is most touching, but grieving at the same time, to hear details which do not come into the papers, relating to his malady & to the efforts he makes to conquer it as far as possible by courage, patience & energy. To think of what he, our young Crownprince Wilhelm, & the whole royal family have had to go through these last 3 weeks! It is too much. What the future may bring us, who will dare to say, but it is sure to have dark days in store for us. Think of France & Russia . . .

I am ever yours very sincerely & faithfully

Caroline v Arnim

AN ESTIMATE OF KAISER WILHELM

Carlsburg bei Züssow, Nov. 11, 1888.

My dear Mr. Kasson,

I look at the date of your kind letter . . . I will proceed now to tell you that I believe you are quite right in what you write about our young Emperor. In the few months of his reign he has shown that his intentions are peaceable ones, that he has the highest & purest aims, & that he stands above the noise and strife of "parties" (can one say that for political "Parteien"?). He surely does not allow himself to be trifled with, & though he has, I believe, a heart that feels deeply & warmly, yet there is nothing in his character of the softness (too great alas) which so characterized his father, our poor martyred Emperor Frederic. I am afraid the rumors about his not agreeing with his mother are very near the truth, & surely there is a fault on both sides, but he has had to suffer more than a man can bear at her hands. Our young William will certainly make many a 'mistake, & that will be only natural in one so young & so fiery, but I believe him to be gifted with a particularly kingly disposition, in fact to be born a king & ruler . . .

I am ever yours faithfully and sincerely

Cv Arnim

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